

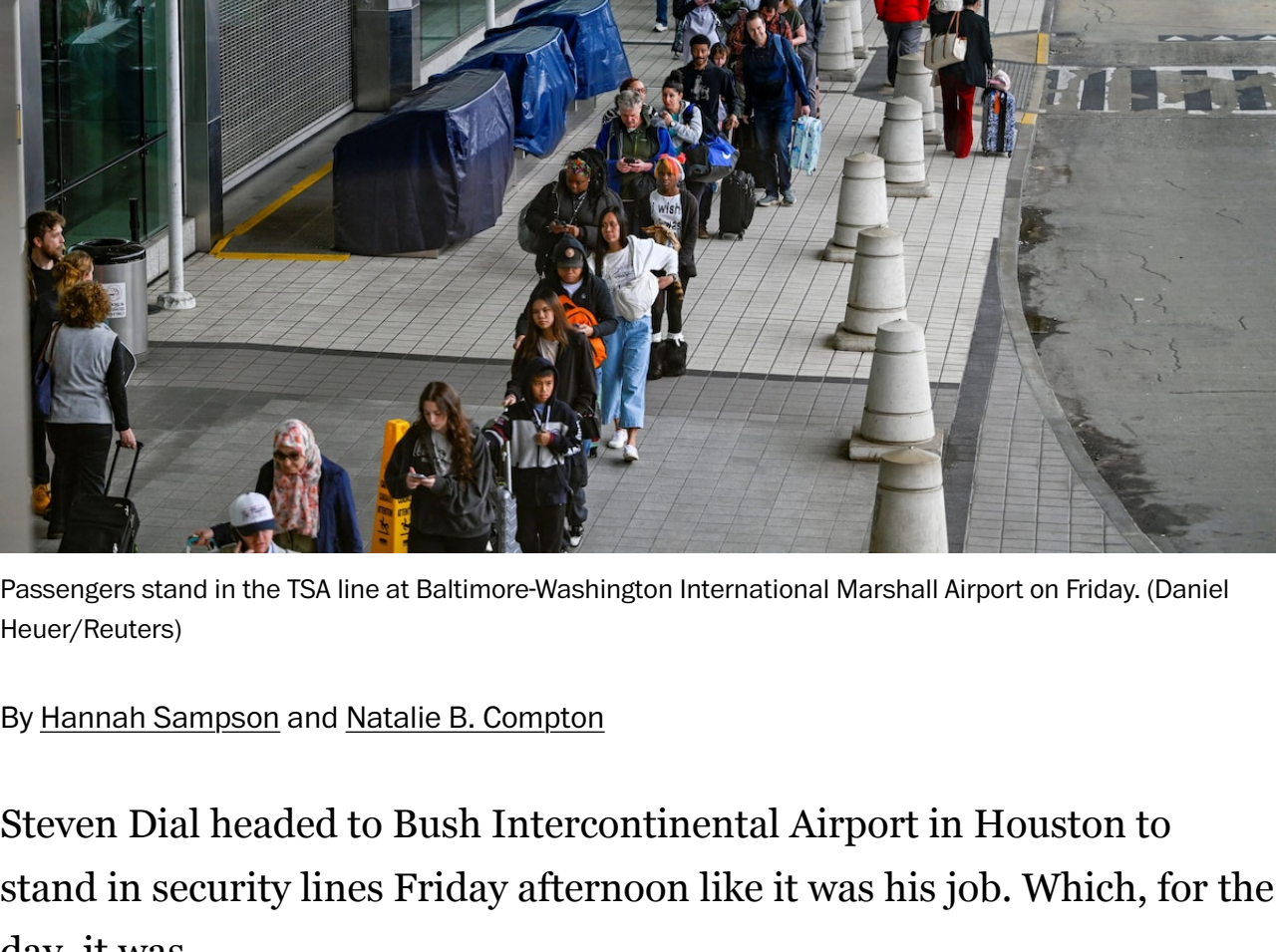
TSA lines are so out of control that travelers are hiring line sitters

Airports are not encouraging the solution, but it isn't stopping some entrepreneurs.

Today at 10:00 a.m. EDT

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Passengers stand in the TSA line at Baltimore-Washington International Marshall Airport on Friday. (Daniel Heuer/Reuters)

By [Hannah Sampson](#) and [Natalie B. Compton](#)

Steven Dial headed to Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston to stand in security lines Friday afternoon like it was his job. Which, for the day, it was.

“I’ve seen parts of the airport now that I didn’t even know existed,” said Dial, 43, who lives in a suburb of Houston. He started his day waiting on behalf of actual travelers at 6:30 a.m.

By 2 p.m., he was en route to line-sit for his fifth client as Transportation Security Administration staffing shortages led to another day of hours-long waits at the Texas airport.

A partial government shutdown that started Feb. 14 persisted Friday, but TSA agents will start seeing paychecks as early as Monday after President Donald Trump [issued an order](#) Friday to pay them using preexisting funds. That should eventually improve wait times, though nearly 500 TSA officers [have quit](#) during the shutdown. On recent days, more than 40 percent of security officers called out at some airports.

While the vast majority of travelers have braved lines or missed flights, grimacing at the lemons they were served, some entrepreneurs have set up their own proverbial lemon stands.

dialsignaturesolutions

IAH Houston George Bush Intercontinental Airport

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See that look on my face? That is the face of a man who just sprinted through IAH after a meeting ran long and nearly missed his flight. 🤔

Vein in my forehead was doing its own thing. Heart rate through the roof. Zero dignity left in the terminal.

And I do this for a living.

So if it can happen to me, it can absolutely happen to you.

That is exactly why I built this service. You should never have to choose between finishing a meeting and catching your flight. I show up at the time YOU tell me, hold your spot in the TSA line, and send you a photo so you know exactly where I am. Walk in, find me, walk through.

That is it.

- 📍 IAH TSA Wait Service
- 💰 \$65/hr + parking passed through at cost (\$5/hr)
- 📸 Photo when I arrive so you know your spot is locked
- 🔄 Updates whenever you want them, just text me
- 📞 To book, DM me, text, or call 346-478-0408 with:
 - ✈️ Airline and flight number
 - 🕒 Date and time you want me at the airport
 - 🕒 Time you plan to arrive
 - 📧 Your email address

Do not be me in this photo. Let me handle the line.

👉 www.dialsignaturesolutions.com/services-store/p/wait-service

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Robert Samuel, owner of the New York-based line waiting service [Same Ole Line Dudes](#), said he's gotten a couple requests for TSA waits since Thursday. The company typically charges \$25 per hour, plus a \$15 fee if the job starts before 7 a.m., but Samuel said an airport job would run higher.

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“Since this line is moving, it’s very different,” he said. “No chair is allowed, and we have to stay on our feet, so the pricing will be \$35 per hour.”

No one had locked in a booking as of Friday, but one of the inquiries — from someone who didn’t want their elderly parents to have to trudge through a queue — was pending.

Samuel, who has been waiting in line for paying customers for 13 years, says the lines travelers have been facing are “crazy.”

“They’re missing special occasions, they can’t get to weddings,” he said. “I heard about siblings that couldn’t make it to their dad’s funeral; it’s heartbreaking.”

TSA controls access to secured areas, like ID checkpoints and baggage X-rays, but not waiting areas. That leaves line waiting policies up to airports, which have not endorsed the moves.

“The fact that people are even considering this as an option should serve as a wake-up call to the Democrats in Congress to reopen DHS,” the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement.

On Friday, lines for security at Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport [stretched outside](#) and wrapped around the building’s exterior. Jonathan Dean, the airport’s director of communications, said BWI does “not have an official airport policy” on hiring someone to wait for you, but they “highly discourage it.”

Houston Airports [said](#) on its website that it does not endorse “for-hire” line-standing services, asking people to stay with their belongings and only use official airport queues.

“For your security, passengers should not pay individuals offering to hold their place in line, as they are not authorized and have not been vetted,” the airport said. “Passengers who choose to use unauthorized services do so at their own risk.”

Dial, in Texas, owns a business called [Dial Signature Solutions](#) offering “executive household support” and mobile notary services. He’s used to waiting around on behalf of people with packed schedules.

“This just seemed like a perfect extension of what I was already offering,” he said. He’s charging \$65 an hour, plus airport parking. Dial said he turned some offers down and talked others out of using him because they were planning to be there early enough and he thought his service was unnecessary.

He said three of his clients used his service as a backup, having him wait until they were sure they could get through priority security lines with their airline status. Once the travelers were through, he got out of line. He did not go through a TSA checkpoint or hold anyone’s bags.

The fourth client checked his bags, then traded places with Dial near the ticketing area. Neighboring passengers were “super understanding,” he said; he had told them someone was going to take his place eventually.

“It’s not like anyone’s cutting because at the end of the day, it’s the same number of people in line,” he said.

Dial said that he hadn’t heard of the airport’s warning about line sitters. His hope is that customers will book his company for future needs.

“Likely today is the last day we’re going to have to deal with this,” he said Friday.

There is an official way for travelers to bypass long TSA waits if they’re willing to spend: hiring concierge services to escort them through security.

Perq Soleil is an airport arrival and departure assistance service that can help travelers through TSA in about a minute flat by accessing alternative lines usually reserved for airport staff and airline personnel. The company — which operates in more than 300 airports and 150 countries — charges a base rate that varies by location.

In Atlanta, the base rate during typical hours for a group of four travelers is \$450, and \$350 at Washington Dules International Airport. Additional travelers cost \$85 each. That rate includes assistance like meeting travelers at their car and helping with their luggage, arranging airport wheelchairs and shopping for them at duty-free shops.

The company [SkySquad](#) also offers expedited TSA services in Baltimore, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Orlando, starting at \$79 per group.

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